

## The *Ctenotus colletti* complex (Lacertilia: Scincidae), including a new species from the Pilbara.

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### Abstract

Former subspecies of *Ctenotus colletti*, viz. *C. c. nasutus* and *C. c. rufescens* are now considered to be allopatric species. Another species *C. nigrilineatus* is described.

### Introduction

When I described *Ctenotus nasutus* (Storr 1969) the only Western Australian material was three specimens from the Great Victoria Desert 1100 km south of La Grange, whence came our two specimens of *C. colletti* (Storr 1975). It therefore seemed prudent to treat *nasutus* as a subspecies of *colletti*. Subsequently *nasutus* has been collected much further north in the Great Sandy Desert; in spite of the proximity of these specimens to the range of *colletti* (see map, Figure 1) they showed no approach towards *colletti*.

Meanwhile *C. rufescens* was described from the vicinity of Exmouth Gulf (Storr 1979); although substantially different in scalation and coloration, it too was treated as a subspecies of *colletti*. Recently a fourth member of the complex was discovered in the Pilbara; it is geographically intermediate between *rufescens* and *colletti* but is in no way morphologically intermediate. It is thus becoming clear that *C. colletti* and its closest relatives are best regarded as full species.

### *Ctenotus nigrilineatus* sp. nov.

Figure 2

#### Holotype

104065 in Western Australian Museum, collected by R.A. How and J. Dell on 23 March 1990 near Woodstock, Western Australia, in 21°36'S, 119°01'E.

#### Paratype

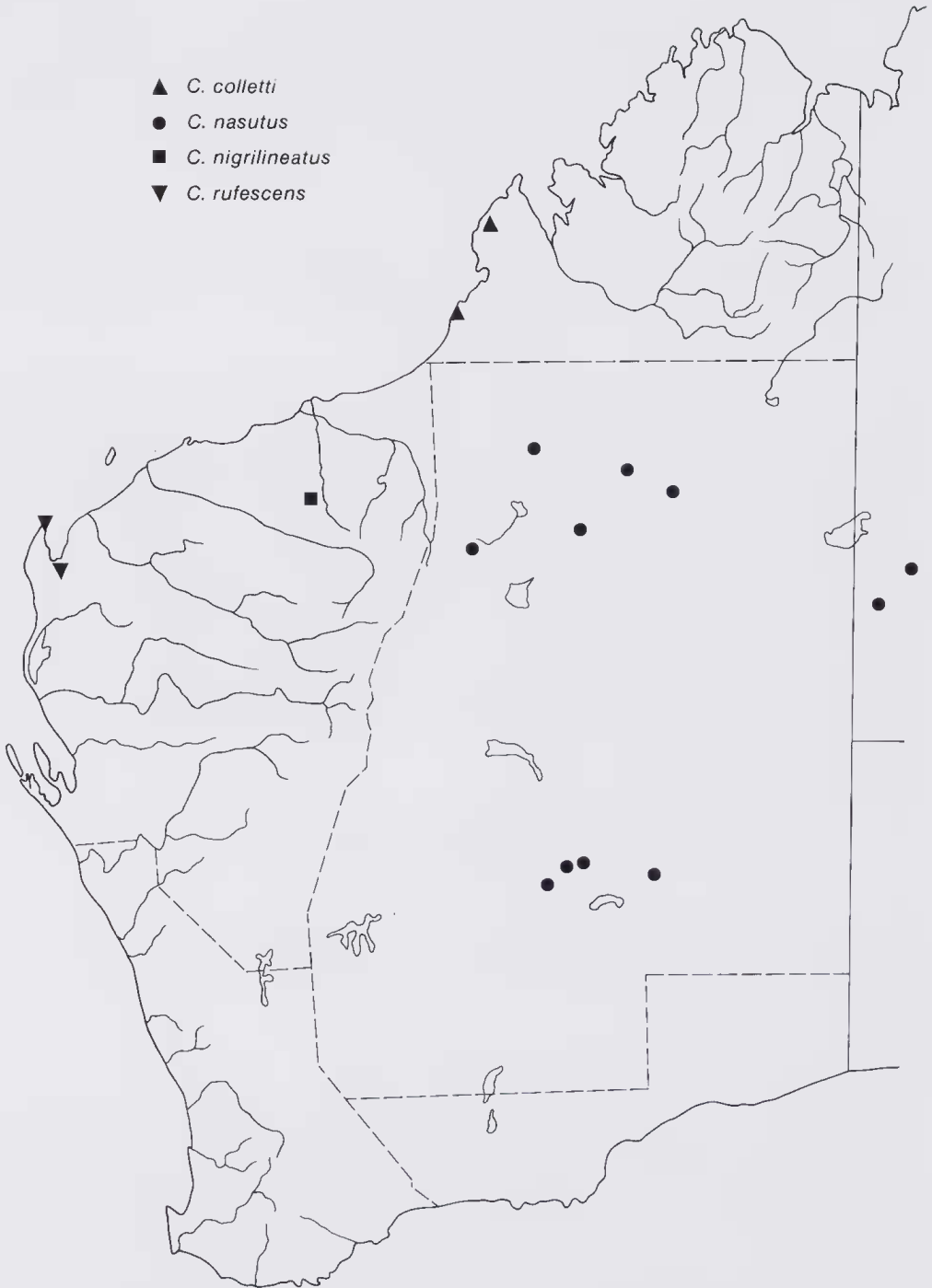
90656 collected at same place.

#### Diagnosis

A member of the *C. colletti* species-group with 8 white longitudinal stripes and upper ear lobule greatly enlarged. Most like *C. nasutus* but 5 black stripes on back equally narrow (v. vertebral widest of 5 blackish brown stripes), prefrontals widely separated (v. normally in contact, rarely separated and then very narrowly) and loreals equal in size (v. second much wider than first). *C. colletti* and *C. rufescens* have 7 dark stripes on back; the latter is unique in the dark upper lateral stripe splitting into two stripes between eye and ear.

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**Figure 1** Map of Western Australia showing location of specimens of *Ctenotus colletti*, *C. nasutus*, *C. nigrilineatus* and *C. rufescens*.

### Description

Snout-vent length (mm): 27.5-48.5. Length of appendages (%SVL): foreleg 25-32, hindleg 43-49, tail 219 (N1).

Nasals narrowly separated. Prefrontals widely separated. Supraoculars 4, first three in contact with frontal, first widest. Supraciliaries 7. Ciliaries 8-10. Presuboculars 2, second much the smaller. Upper labials 7. Ear lobules 1 or 2, upper very much the larger. Nuchals 3 or 4. Midbody scale rows 26. Lamellae under longer toe 24-27, mostly with a fine weak mucronate keel.

Upper surface white (scales finely brown-edged) with 5 narrow black stripes on back: vertebral extending to frontonasal after breaking up into spots on occiput and extending to tail; inner dorsal extending to second loreal or first supraocular after short break on occiput; outer dorsal extending to first or second supraocular and merging with inner dorsal on tail. Wide black upper lateral stripe from nasal to tail. Narrow black or dark grey ventrolateral stripe extending forward nearly to ear and back to hindleg. Upper surface of limbs white (scales finely brown-edged) with 3 longitudinal blackish stripes. Wide midlateral stripe and lower surface white.



Figure 2 Holotype of *Ctenotus nigrilineatus*, photographed by J. Dell.

### Distribution

Only known from one locality in hilly interior of Pilbara.

### Derivation of name

From Latin *niger* (black) and *linea* (line), in allusion to dorsal pattern.

**Other material examined** (all from Western Australia and in Western Australian Museum)

*Ctenotus colletti*: 26 km S Beagle Bay Mission (58489); La Grange (27883, 27886).

*Ctenotus rufescens*: Vlaming Head (60950); 3 km E Giralda (60994, 61152).

*Ctenotus nasutus*: 38 km SSW McTavish Claypan (64283-4, 64291); 15 km WSW Thompson Hills (94981-2); Well 39, Canning Stock Route (64220); 12 km NNE Well 29, Canning Stock Route (63957); 29 km S Nooloo Soak (63750, 63763); 8 km NE Duges Table Hill (30250, 85704, 85779); 8 km WNW Point Salvation (85674-5, 85679, 89245, 99546-8).

**References**

- Storr, G.M. (1969). The genus *Ctenotus* (Lacertilia, Scincidae) in the Eastern Division of Western Australia. *J. Proc. R. Soc. West. Aust.* **51**: 97-109.
- Storr, G.M. (1975). The genus *Ctenotus* (Lacertilia, Scincidae) in the Kimberley and North-West Divisions of Western Australia. *Rec. West. Aust. Mus.* **3**: 209-243.
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